GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5624
ANSWERED ON:02.05.2000
PACKAGED FOOD PRODUCTS
CHANDRA NATH SINGH

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether all packaged food products in the country will have to carry a `best before` date on them;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the date from which it is likely to be made applicable?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)

(SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM)

(a)&(b) Yes, Sir. A proposal for introducing the concept of `Best Before` onpackaged foods other than beverages is under consideration based on the recommendation of Central Committee for Food Standards (CCFS), a statutory advisory body under the Prevention of Food Adulteration (PFA) Act 1954. The proposal for beverages is being processed separately. As per these proposals, every manufacturer will have to indicate on the package the date of manufacture or packing of the product and the date upto which the product will retain its optimum quality viz. the `best before` date. This information will help consumers to make an informed choice when purchasing packaged food products.

(c) The notification will be issued after processing in this Ministry and vetting by Ministry of Law. Hence it is not possible at this juncture to indicate exact date of implementation. However, care will be taken to ensure that manufacturers are given adequate time to meet the new requirements.